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and take courage, and to know well that the world is not forsaken by him who made it and who still rules it."

Therefore while the writer does not wish to see any Friend violate his conscientious scruples as to bearing arms, he still thinks that all Friends should do their utmost to support the Government in all ways short of this, so that the world shall be made "free for Democracy," and a "safe place for the little nations." And if any young Friend feels it his conscientious duty to enter the military service, as has happened before, and may well happen again, I cannot find in my mind any right to condemn him, being convinced that all such decisions must be left to the court of the individual conscience.

ETHICAL ASPECTS OF CONSCRIPTION AND THE WAR

By CHARLES E. JEFFERSON, D.D.

ON December 9th, 1814, Daniel Webster said in the United States Congress: "Where is it written in the Constitution, in what article or section is it claimed, that you may take children from their parents, compel them to fight the battles of any war in which the follies or the wickedness of the Government may engage? A free government, with an uncontrolled power of military conscription, is a solecism at once the most ridiculous and abominable that ever entered into the head of man." Was Webster right or was he wrong?

Christian men are, as a rule, desirous of doing their duty. They do not want to be either slackers or apostates. They want to be faithful both to the Church and to the State. They desire to pay their debt to Cæsar and to God. They are Christians, and they are also patriots—lovers of Christ and lovers of their country. Such they have been in the days of peace, and such they want to remain in the days of war. They do not want to surrender either their patriotism or their Christianity. They are eager to hold on to both. They want to go with their country, and they also wish to go with Christ. Can they go with their country and with Christ at the same time? "Follow Christ!" "Follow the Flag!" are two voices forever sounding in their ears. Can a man follow both at the same time? Is it possible in time of war to render to Cæsar the full measure of the service which belongs to him, and at the same time completely satisfy God? That is the question by which millions of young men are now confronted.

It is because I feel the sharp edge of that question, and sympathize so keenly with those who are grappling with it, day and night, that I have written down a few thoughts which I trust may be of at least a little service to those who are trying to feel their way toward conclusions which are patriotic and rational and Christian.

And first of all it ought to be said that in times of strain and stress we must be exceedingly patient with one another. Some of us are so impatient, so hot-headed, so partisan, so narrow-minded, so bigoted. All men cannot think alike, and we must accept that as a fact, and not rail against it and allow ourselves to be thrown into a bad humor by it. All Christian men cannot think alike, whether they be lawyers, doctors, teachers, elders, vestrymen, deacons, or clergymen. All patriots cannot think alike. Men equally devoted to their

country arrive at diametrically opposite conclusions. That is a fact which must be reckoned with, and we must be content to have men differ from us without our getting ugly or using words of insolence and insult. We must try to follow Paul's advice and "truth it in love."

It is foolish, for instance, to say that a man is not a consistent Christian because in his judgment the time has arrived when the United States ought to render armed assistance to the Entente Allies. Tens of thousands of armed Christians believe that it is our duty to fight, and they are not on the whole one whit inferior in piety, in consecration, or in conscientiousness to those who cannot agree with them. It is not because these Christian men have suddenly forgotten all about their religion, and have degenerated into bloodthirsty jingoes that they want the United States to enter the war, but because they believe that the everlasting principles of righteousness have been trampled on by an Empire whose ruling oligarchy believes that might makes right, and that it is infamous for a mighty nation like our own to look on while Belgium and France are trampled into mire and blood, without lifting a hand in their defense. In my opinion, Mr. Wilson never got on to high and solid ground until he wrote his address of April 2. Before that he was always—it seemed to me—on a low moral level. He was always dwelling on the loss of *American* ships and bemoaning the loss of *American* lives. His argument did not win the assent of my mind. Great Britain sowed a certain zone of the sea with mines, and told us to keep out of it. We kept out; it was good sense to keep out. Had we ventured in, our ships would have been sunk and our men, women, and children would have been drowned. She warned us, and we heeded her warning. Germany sowed a zone of the sea with submarines, and told us to keep out of it. We did not keep out, and so we paid the penalty.

Going to war for the defense of the privilege of pushing our munition ships into British harbors was not a project which I as a Christian man could ever justify. But as time went on the problem changed. The question was no longer whether our munition ships have a right to go where they please, but whether democracy either in the old world or the new is safe from the subtle plottings of an oligarchy backed up with extraordinary military prowess and equipment. Herr Zimmermann's note to Mexico threw a flood of light on the attitude and methods of the German oligarchy, and when Mr. Gerard returned from Germany he probably made it clear to Mr. Wilson that without our assistance the Allies could not win a victory, and that in case of their collapse the United States would be the next nation to be attacked by this unprincipled and well-nigh irresistible Prussian oligarchy. At any rate, the speech of April 2 had an entirely different tone from any of its predecessors. Take, for instance, this:

It is a war against all nations. . . . The challenge is to all mankind. . . . The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life. . . . [These things have] played their part in serving to convince us at last that that government entertains no real friendship for us, and means to act against our peace and security at its convenience. . . . We know that in such a government, following such methods, We can never have a friend. . . . We are now about to accept the gauge of battle with this natural foe to liberty. . . . The world must be made safe for democracy. . . . We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind.

We are in armed opposition to an irresponsible government which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and of right, and is running amuck.

This put the situation in a new light. That address is on the whole the most notable state paper in American history since the days of Washington. Nothing comparable to it has been read by our people since Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address. It is by all odds the ablest state paper that the war has produced in any land. It is noble, moving, masterly. Possibly the world may wait a thousand years before it produces anything which equals it. That one speech converted probably millions of Americans into advocates of war. We know it consolidated both houses of Congress, and although we can only conjecture, it is not improbable that the vote of Congress carried the approval of a considerable majority of all the people in the United States.

It is foolish, therefore, so it seems to me, to denounce Christians who favor the war and to taunt them with having surrendered the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. I pity the man who cannot feel the force of the argument which can be urged in justification of our participation in this war. But equally astray are the men who have only harsh words for those who feel that another and wiser course could have been followed. We have no right to call a man who is enthusiastic for the war a barbarian, and we have no right to call a man who deprecates it a traitor. A man is not disloyal to his country because he wants his country to do what in his judgment will be best for his country and the highest interests of mankind. He may be mistaken in his judgment, but his heart is all right. Patriotism is a thing of the heart. A man is a patriot if his heart beats true to his country.

From day to day, straight through the war, good men are going to be divided over questions of procedure. One man will think this is wise, another man will think something quite different is wise. To say to any man, Now, if you agree with me you are a patriot, and if you do not agree with me you are a traitor, is not creditable conduct in a full-grown man. Let us do our best to keep free from it ourselves, and let us condemn it in others.

Much is said just now about our duty of standing behind the President. We ought to get a clear idea of what that means. In one sense it is true, and in another sense it may not be true. Patriotism has become synonymous in many minds with willingness to stand behind the President. But a little thought will convince any one that standing behind the President at all times is not essential to patriotism. No one, I presume, would question the patriotism of Mr. Theodore Roosevelt. He is, in the opinion of millions, the very incarnation of American patriotism. In him is to be found the consummate flower of the patriotic spirit. Patriotism of the red-blooded variety mounts in his soul to the highest power. But when has Mr. Roosevelt ever gotten behind the President unless the President happened to be going Mr. Roosevelt's way? Mr. Roosevelt feels it to be his patriotic duty to get in front of the President whenever the President and Mr. Roosevelt do not agree. He jumps up and down in front of him, and makes the most horrid faces, and hurls at him whole volleys of the most vigorous and Rooseveltian expressions, and no one has ever ventured to intimate that Mr. Roosevelt is not a genuine and full-blooded patriot!

The New York daily press prides itself on its patriotism. No other set of men in America are so loudly devoted to the honor and vital interests and moral duties of America as the proprietors and editors of our daily papers, and yet if you will turn the files of those papers for the last four years, you will find that several of them furiously refused to get behind the President, claiming and exercising the right to criticise him, and make fun of him, and revile him, and handicap him in every way possible. Whenever he said a word which looked in the direction of war, they jumped behind him. Whenever he exercised the virtue of watchful waiting they jumped at him. This demonstrates that patriotism and getting behind the President are not one and the same thing.

Indeed, Mr. Wilson does not expect or desire us to get behind him, if that means saying Amen to everything he says, and thinking his thoughts after him. In a letter written the other day to Mr. Arthur Brisbane, of New York, Mr. Wilson said: "I can imagine no greater disservice to the country than to establish a system of censorship that would deny to the people of a free republic like our own, their indisputable right to criticise their own public officials. I would regret in a crisis like the one through which we are now passing to lose the benefits of patriotic and intelligent criticism." Mr. Wilson is a large-minded man, and moreover he knows American history, and he knows that this is a country of free thought and free speech, and that American citizens ought never to be asked to surrender either of them.

We must do a deal of thinking about this word patriotism, and find out if we can what patriotism is. If it is not necessarily getting behind the President, what is it? Eulogizing the flag, waving the flag, worshipping the flag? No! Flag worship is not patriotism. If a man were a German spy he would at once hang two United States flags from his front window. Patriotism is like religion—it is best when least ostentatious.

Ever since war was declared, we who are called Pacifists have had to face the question: What is the courageous and manly and consistent thing to do? Pacifists are those who believe that war is a stupid and clumsy and barbaric way of settling international disputes, and that the wholesale slaughter of human beings is too vile a thing to last, and that it is the duty of all lovers of mankind to work as hard as they can to devise international tribunals which shall supplant the arbitrament of the sword. But our nation has decided through its legal officials that just now the interests of justice and humanity will be best served by making use of the old clumsy and barbarous instrument of the Pagan world, and there is nothing, it seems to me, for the Pacifist to do but to acquiesce in that decision, and do what he can to make his country effective in the course which has been decided on. Before the declaration of war, I could see at least twenty reasons why we ought not to go into the war. But I am interested in those reasons no longer. We are in the war. We are going to stay in. We are not coming out till the very end. For better or for worse we are in, and I see nothing to be gained by lamenting that we are in, or by piling up arguments to prove that we ought never to have gone in.

It is not cowardice or inconsistency for a Pacifist to yield to the inevitable. It is just common sense. He can think of war what he has always thought. He can still believe that the old bloody, barbaric method will

some day be cast aside. But in the meantime he ought, I think, to do what he can to help the nation attain the end which the Government has set out to reach.

I count it a mistake for any man or any set of men to try at this present time to handicap or cripple the Government in any way. We are now in a state of war with the mightiest military empire the world has ever known. It is a hazardous predicament in which we find ourselves. We must get an army, and a big one, and we must get it as soon as possible. No matter what any one of us thinks of war, I do not see how he can convince himself that it is his duty to embarrass and handicap the Government in carrying out the policy which the representatives of the people have decided on. Now that we are at war, we must put ourselves largely into the hands of the military and naval experts. The things they tell us to do, we had better do. They understand the technique of war. The war policy having been voted by civilians, it is now the machinery of war which must be developed. In time of peace I have always resented every interference of the naval and military officers in our national legislation. I have said: "Hands off! Keep out of there. It is not your business to shape the policy of the United States." But a policy once decided on by the civil representatives of the people, the execution of that policy must be left in the hands of the men who are trained for that sort of business. I will not, therefore, lift my finger to handicap in any way the swift and efficient carrying out of the national will as expressed in our National Congress. We are at war with the German autocracy, and our business is to render whatever assistance we can to those nations which are leagued together to break its power.

Some one may ask: If I am convinced that this war is a blunder and a crime, how can I keep still? How can I lend a hand to an enterprise which I believe to be iniquitous? How can I render help, if I believe that Wall Street and Big Business, through a reptile press, forced Mr. Wilson's hand and shoved the nation into war? My answer is, Possibly you are mistaken; a crowd can be mistaken—so also can an individual. As Cromwell said once to a troublesome objector: "I beg you by the bowels of Christ to believe that you may be mistaken!"

It is conceivable that those who did their best to hold us out of war were mistaken. The thoughts and ways of God are oftentimes beyond the vision even of his most faithful and trusted servants. It may be—it is thinkable, imaginable, supposable—that our participation in this war is a part of the eternal plan, and that centuries hence the world will clearly see why it was best for Congress to take the stand it did. Now, since the objectors to the war may be mistaken, it seems to me that after a man has borne his testimony to the truth as he sees it, he has done his duty, and may, without inconsistency or recreancy to his faith, hold his tongue, hoping all the time that in ways he cannot see or understand the Spirit of the Almighty is working in the darkness and the chaos to accomplish his own good pleasure. A man has no right—so I think—to jeopardize in a crisis like this the life and liberties of his country by a stubborn insistence on his right to think and act as he pleases. This is one of the times when I accept the maxim that it is a good thing to stand behind the President. He is the

nation's head. We are at war with the Prussian autocracy. Confusion is dangerous. Delay may be fatal. Should the Allies collapse, we should be at the mercy of an oligarchy which has shown again and again that it knows no mercy. It behooves us all to do what we can to prepare our country to meet the fury of the tempest toward which it is moving.

One other question remains. What is a man to do who believes that it is a sin to kill a human being, and that he renounces his Christian faith the moment he places himself under an officer who has authority to command him to take human life? Shall that man carry a gun at the order of our National Congress? I think not. A man must never do what he conscientiously believes it is a sin to do. If to him killing in time of war is a sin against Almighty God, then he ought to serve his country in some other way than in the trenches. There is one chamber in the soul too sacred for any government to be allowed to enter—that chamber is the conscience. The conscience must at every cost be kept inviolate. No government is given authority by God to force men to do what they believe is wrong.

No civilized government ought to compel a man to do what he believes in his heart of hearts is wrong. The apostles at the very start of their career had to face the question whether they were to hearken to the civil rulers rather than unto God. They settled it then and there, and they settled it right. They decided once for all that no matter what it cost, they would obey the voice of God speaking in their conscience. They got imprisoned for their temerity, but they paid the price without flinching. Ultimately all of them but one lost their lives, and they laid down their lives gladly. There are indeed things worth dying for, and one of them is the inviolability of conscience. Christians are servants of Jesus Christ. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. Over the flag of the Stars and Stripes there floats the banner of the Cross. Man's first allegiance is not to his nation, but to humanity—not to Cæsar, but to God. When Cæsar says, "Do this even though you believe it to be contrary to the will of God," he is asking something which does not belong to him, and which a Christian must promptly and resolutely refuse to give. Every century has had its martyrs. Why should our century go free?

The world is not sufficiently advanced for conscientious objectors to put an end to killing in our day, but there are more of them today than any preceding generation has ever known. In every city and village, possibly in every college and in every church, there are young men who do not hesitate to say that the Government may shoot them, but that kill men they never will. Here is a rising power that must some day be reckoned with. The day is coming when the conscientious objectors will be so numerous that statesmen will hesitate long before they decide on war. They will say to one another: "We dare not risk it. We must find some other way." Three members of the British Cabinet at the opening of the war—one of them Mr. John Morley—laid down their office, saying: "We will have no part in this bloody business!" That is prophetic of the day which is surely coming, when all the statesmen of the world will say, when international disputes arise: "Come now and let us reason together!"